

- SUBJECT:** Creating specialty license plates for female veterans with disabilities
- COMMITTEE:** Defense and Veterans' Affairs — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — S. King, Frank, Aycock, Blanco, Farias, Schaefer, Shaheen
0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — LaShonda Johnson; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jim Brennan, Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations)

Against — None

On — Edith Disler, Texas Veterans Commission; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Tim Thompson, Texas Department of Motor Vehicles)
- BACKGROUND:** Transportation Code, sec. 504.202 entitles certain veterans with disabilities resulting from military service to register for specialty license plates. A person eligible for a license plate under this section may register for personal use one vehicle without paying any fee, other than the fee for the specialty plates.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 612 would require the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles to design and make available a specialty license plate for distribution to eligible female veterans of the armed forces with disabilities. This specialty plate could include the words “Woman Disabled Veteran” and “U.S. Armed Forces” or “Disabled Veteran” and “U.S. Armed Forces” at the bottom of each license plate.

This bill would take effect September 1, 2015.
- SUPPORTERS SAY:** CSHB 612 would give female veterans who were disabled as a result of military service the recognition they deserve. About 177,000 female veterans live in Texas, and more than 28,000 are disabled. While the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles offers 25 license plates for disabled service people, no license plate specifically recognizes the service of

disabled female veterans.

This growing and under-recognized segment of the veteran population deserves to know that the state of Texas honors their service and sacrifices. These specialty license plates and associated benefits appropriately would convey that appreciation. These benefits include the ability to park in spaces reserved for people with disabilities and an exemption from certain parking meter fees.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

No apparent opposition.

NOTES:

Unlike the committee substitute, HB 612 as introduced would have allowed the inclusion of the letters “WDV” on the license plates. The introduced bill also would have allowed a license plate with the letters “WDV” to be personalized with up to three characters.